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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 110
By Armstrong

A RESOLUTION to honor E. Almer "Al" Curtis, Jr. on the occasion
of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this body should recognize those who in their
years of work have performed with extraordinary dedication and unprecedented devotion; and

WHEREAS, E. Almer "Al" Curtis, Chief Executive Officer of WSJK/WKOP, Channels 2
and 15, has taken a much-deserved retirement after 31 years of service that stands
unparalleled in excellence in the annals of the East Tennessee Public Communications
Corporation; and

WHEREAS, he has participated in the furtherance of public broadcasting locally,
statewide, and nationally; and

WHEREAS, as a result of his many faithful and exemplary years at the helm of this once
small educational station, Al Curtis is admired and respected by his colleagues for his
outstanding service to public television and the Knoxville community; and

WHEREAS, Al Curtis shepherded the station from a tiny educational channel operated
by the Tennessee State Board of Education to an independent PBS affiliate with two signals
that together cover most of East Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, born in 1931, in Fountain City, to E. Almer and Edith Edwards Curtis, Sr.,
Al, Jr. grew up in North Knoxville and attended Central High School and the University of
Tennessee; and

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WHEREAS, Al Curtis has a total of 41 years in television, his first job was directing the “Cas Walker Farm and Home Hour”; and

WHEREAS, he worked on the “Wide, Wide Globe” and “The Tennessee Jamboree,” played both title roles on “Cartoon Capers with Uncle Fudd and the Birthday Dog” and directed “Startime,” hosted by mobile home magnate, Jim Clayton; and

WHEREAS, interested in making music on his own, he formed the Al Curtis Big Band in 1960; the group doubled as a back-up band for bigger artists touring the area, including Liberace, Eddy Arnold, Tom Jones and Mitzi Gaynor; and

WHEREAS, in 1966, Al Curtis became the producer-director at fledgling WSJK a few months before the station actually went on the air; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as general manager in 1969, WSJK became Tennessee’s first educational TV station; that same year, National Educational Television became the Public Broadcasting System; and

WHEREAS, a gentleman who realizes that citizenship entails many responsibilities as well as privileges, Al Curtis has participated in numerous civic organizations, including the Board of Governors of the Lexington Unit of the Shriners Hospitals for Crippled Children in Kentucky, and he will continue booking talent for the Tennessee Valley Fair; and

WHEREAS, Al Curtis will continue to be “the Guy Lombardo of Knoxville” as the leader of the Al Curtis Big Band; and

WHEREAS, Al Curtis is truly blessed, for he shares love and compassion with his beautiful wife of 39 years, Lola Thacker Curtis and his two daughters, Dedie Stansfield and Tina Curtis, and two grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, E. Almer Curtis, Jr. has been elected President Emeritus of WSJK-TV and WKOP-TV, with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE

CONCURRING, That we honor Mr. E. Almer "Al" Curtis, Jr., for his outstanding service to WSJK and WKOP and extend to him our best wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.